

Tasking Memorandum No. 99-16

Memorandum For Cdrs DCMDs, District CFOs

Subject: "Response to the Air Force Pilot Prioritization Plan" (TASKING)

Date: October 20, 1998

Suspense Date: December 1, 1998

Target Audience: District Commanders and District CFOs

New Information/Guidance/Tools:

- Purpose: To ensure DCMC Flight Operations activities are fully aware of the affects of the Air Force Pilot Prioritization Plan.
- To provide District **CFOs** with methods of mitigating the Plan's affects.
- To direct the re-coding of all Air Force pilot billets to reflect their current duties with greater accuracy.
- Background: To deal with continuing pilot shortages, the Air Force has established a Pilot Prioritization Plan. Generally, the Plan directs filling line pilot billets (i.e., those pilots whose primary responsibility is flying) at 100% and staff pilot billets at 75%. In DCMC, the plan will immediately affect non-flying Government Flight Representatives (GFR) billets, and eventually affect our District CFO billets and headquarters flight operations officer billets as well.
- The attached fact sheet describes the Plan, its affect on DCMC, and immediate actions District **CFOs** need to take in response to the Prioritization Plan.
- The fact sheet also outlines additional methods District **CFOs** can use to mitigate the impact of the Air Force pilot shortage.
- Requirements: District **CFOs**, along with District military manpower personnel, should take those actions needed to re-code all pilot billets where flying is a primary responsibility to Rated Position Identifier (RPI) Code 1.
- Conclusion: As the shortage problem progresses, each CFO will have to work closely with their counterparts from the other Districts and DCMC Flight Operations to ensure GFR and CFO work loads are distributed effectively. The pilot shortage problem will not be solved in the near future. I call upon everyone to use creative thinking and teamwork to ensure effective mission accomplishment.

Point of Contact for Further Information:

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COMMANDER

Attachment

FACT SHEET

SUBJECT: The Affect of the Air Force Pilot Prioritization Plan on DCMC Flight Operations

BACKGROUND:

- The United States Air Force is undergoing a severe pilot shortage. By the end of FY 99, the Air Force will be approximately 1200 pilots short of its needs. The shortage is expected to increase to 2300 pilots by the end of FY 02, and then to gradually improve over the following 5 to 7 years. These figures come from Lt Col Greg **Nowell**, HQ USAF/XOOTA. Col **Nowell** stated that these figures are realistic, if a little optimistic.
- To deal with the shortage, the Air Force has instituted a Pilot Prioritization Plan. The Plan affects all pilots not occupying a billet where flight duties are primary, that is, those billets identified as a Rated Position Identifier (RPI) Code 1. Pilots occupying Joint Billets are also exempt. Exempt billets will be filled at 100%. All other pilot billets will be filled at 75%.
- Twelve DCMC billets fall into the “exempt” category. The 12 include, as an example, the District Chiefs of Flight Operations (CFOs) for Districts West and East. Both occupy joint billets. **XOOTA’s** spreadsheet shows 9 positions in District East that aren’t exempt, 14 in District West, and 3 in International, for a total of 26. This allows us to fill 19 “staff pilot billets, of which 14 are presently filled.
- DCMC-OI has resisted rank ordering the affected billets since we consider each position critical to mission accomplishment. In most cases, the Government Flight Representative (GFR) is the single rated officer and he/she is therefore “one-deep” offices.

DISCUSSION:

- Col **Nowell** discussed the Prioritization Plan at length, with **DCMC-OI**. The Air Force does not expect anything from DCMC that states “This pilot is priority one...this pilot’s priority two, three, four.. .etc.” They recommend we internally prioritize our billets so that when we hit the 75% wall we can decide if we should give up the fill, or reprioritize.
- Internally prioritized or not, when we hit the 75% threshold, the Air Force will refuse to advertise any further pilot positions affected by the Plan. When that happens, the affected District CFO must decide if the job can be done some other way without using an Air Force pilot.

OPTIONS:

- CFOs should explore using secondary delegation letters and redistributing non-resident GFR duties. It is important to mention that under the new “Draft” Tri-Service

Agreement (still in coordination), wording has been added that limits GFR oversight to a maximum of six sites, only four of which can be done as Primary GFR.

- If redistributing the workload is not feasible, the CFO should consider converting the pilot billet to a navigator billet. This may or may not work since navigators are rapidly becoming scarce themselves. CFOs can increase their chances of filling a rated billet with a navigator if they re-code positions listed as "Navigator or Pilot" to just "Navigator".
- The next option is to move an Army or Navy billet into the job. This option may be very difficult, if not impossible. The Navy is also experiencing a pilot shortage. And, in any case, CFOs should always strive to ensure the bulk of any GFR's duties remain focused on contracts from the GFR's Parent Service.
- Only after the District CFOs have exhausted all other attempts to fill the position or redistribute the workload, will we explore other options.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Beginning immediately, each District CFO needs to look at their pilot RPI codes. Every pilot who's actively flying (with the exception of Lt Col Baily and Major Shevlin from District West) should be in a RPI 1 billet. Col Nowell agrees, RPI 1 is the appropriate code for pilots even if they were hired to be a unit CFO or Government Flight Representative (GFR). CFOs should work with their District military personnel offices and accomplish the necessary paperwork needed to re-code all active flying billets.
- Once the active flying billets are re-coded as RPI 1s (and therefore exempt) only DCMC HQs, DCMD HQs, and non-resident GFR positions will remain affected by the Plan.
- The HQ billets, although exempt now, will be affected when anyone rotates since their Joint status will end at that time.

CONCLUSION: The Air Force's Pilot Prioritization Plan is only the tip of the manning nightmare iceberg. As mentioned earlier, pilot manning is expected to remain critical for the Air Force for the foreseeable future, peaking in FY 02. Getting additional billets from the Air Force is unlikely...very unlikely. We are all going to have to be as creative and flexible as possible when dealing with pilot shortage reality.

APPROVED BY: COLONEL MICHAEL FALVEY MF 10/19

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